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Paris, February 21st, 1985.

Dr. Harold E. VARMUS
Dept. of Microbiology
UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA
Medical Center
San Francisco, California 94122
U. S. A.

Dear Dr. Varmus,

Enclosed copy of a letter I sent to Robin Weiss which might concern you as co-author of the RNA Tumor Virus book.

I trust you are also interested in Taxonomy of the AIDS virus as chairman of the Taxonomy Committee on Retroviruses.

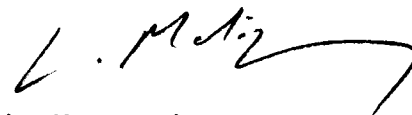
It seems clear that this virus is not a member of the HTLV "family". Its classification as member of the Lentivirus subfamily awaits further information on the genomic structure of the Visna-Maedi and EIAV groups, particularly the existence of two extra *orf*s and transacting elements. Careful examination of morphology shows closest similarities with EIAV.

I should be glad to discuss these matters with you, since I have the opportunity to attend several scientific meetings in the U.S.A. this Spring.

For your information, I enclose copies of :

- a recent review paper on LAV
- a letter on the phylogeny of the AIDS virus which will appear soon in Nature.

Sincerely yours,



L. Montagnier, M.D.